



THE LIBERTY "BOYS OF '76"

A Weekly Magazine containing Stories of the American Revolution.

Issued Weekly—By Subscription \$2.50 per year. Entered as Second Class Matter at the New York Post Office, February 4, 1901, by Frank Tousey.

No. 32.

NEW YORK, AUGUST 9, 1901.

Price 5 Cents.

THE LIBERTY BOYS SHADOWED; OR AFTER DICK SLATER FOR REVENGE. BY HARRY MOORE.



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"We are sure we saw that rebel spy, Dick Slater, and a comrade, enter the house, Miss, and, with or without your permission, we must make a search for them!" said the Tory.

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CHAPTER I.

SHADOWED.

It was late afternoon of a beautiful day in the early fall.
It was the year 1780.

The British commander-in-chief, General Clinton, occupied the city of New York.

Redcoats were everywhere.

The streets of the city were thronged with them.

On this afternoon of which we write, a handsome young man, seemingly about twenty-one years of age, was walking slowly down Broadway.

The young man in question was erect and soldierly looking, but was dressed in citizen's clothing.

His step was springy, denoting strength, activity and vim and energy, which comes from perfect health.

His face was bronzed almost to the hue of an Indian's.

His eyes were keen and clear.

This young man was a noted character.

His name was Dick Slater, and he had made himself famous as a patriot spy and scout.

Although the city of New York was filled with British soldiers, even though the streets were thronged with them, Dick walked along as cool and calm as if he had been within the lines of the patriots instead of the British.

Dick sauntered along down the street.

He was on the east side of the street, going southward.

Dick was about two-thirds of the way from the Common down at Bowling Green, when, just before he came to a combined tavern and rum-shop, four British soldiers emerged from the place.

They turned to come up the street, and met Dick, face to face.

Dick stepped slightly to one side to let them pass.

He did not pay any particular attention to them.

Had he done so he would have noticed that one of the soldiers started violently and almost uttered an exclamation.

He looked at the youth very searchingly as Dick passed.

The other three soldiers were unaware of anything unusual until spoken to by their companion.

"Wait!" he said, in a low tone.

The soldier in question had paused and was looking after Dick.

The other three soldiers paused, faced about and looked at their comrade, questioningly.

"What's the matter, Hubbard?" asked one.

"Matter enough, fellows!" was the low, intense reply.

"Do you see that fellow, yonder?"

"Yes; what of him?"

"What of him?"

The man's voice was tense with feeling.

"Yes; what of him?"

"This: You've heard me tell about how myself and some comrades planned to kill the rebel general, Schuyler, up in Albany?"

"Yes, we heard you tell about it, old man; and how you got caught and neatly trapped while trying to put your plan into operation."

"That's it, exactly."

"And you know who I said it was discovered our plan and set the trap that caught us?"

"Yes, you said it was Dick Slater, the rebel spy."

"So I did; and, fellows, that fellow yonder is no other than Dick Slater!"

"What!"

"Dick Slater, the rebel spy!"

"Here in New York!"

"Yes, it is Dick Slater, here and in New York!"

"Surely you must be mistaken," one of his comrades said. "Surely he would not dare venture into New York! He would be taking his life into his hands."

"Bah! you don't know Dick Slater. He thinks no more of taking his life into his hands, in such a manner, than you do of going to bed at night. He is a regular dare-devil."

"He must be."

"He is; but this time he has made a mistake. He has placed his head into the lion's mouth. When he spoiled our plans up in Albany and caused our capture, I swore that I would have revenge; and now that it has come in my way, I am going to make my words good. Come, let us follow him."

The four soldiers followed Dick down the street.

While they were talking, Dick had gone perhaps half a block.

They had not lost sight of him, however, and as he was walking slowly, they had no trouble in drawing near him.

Dick sauntered slowly along.

Dick had no suspicion that he was being shadowed.

He had not looked back after meeting the redcoats, so had not seen them stop and turn around.

Usually, Dick was extremely watchful and took care to note what was going on all around him, but this time his attention was particularly attracted toward the front.

It would be supposed that Dick would watch the redcoats, closely, but they were the only people on the street to whom Dick paid no attention.

He eyed everybody else, searchingly.

It seemed as if he were looking for some one specially.

Dick flashed quick, searching glances into the faces of all whom he met.

He made his way onward, slowly.

Behind him came the four redcoats.

Presently Dick reached Bowling Green.

The little park was thronged with people.

Men, women and children were there.

Soldiers and their sweethearts were sauntering hither and thither.

Dick walked slowly around in the little park for a few minutes.

Then he left and made his way back up Broadway.

He was now on the west side of the street.

The four redcoats kept as close behind Dick as they dared.

They were not expert at shadowing, but Dick's attention was attracted in another direction, so he did not discover that he was followed.

"What's the use of us following him around, Hubbard?" asked one of the redcoats. "Let's jump onto him and make him a prisoner."

"Not by a long shot!" replied Hubbard.

"Why not? You want revenge, don't you?"

"Yes, but I wouldn't get it that way."

"You wouldn't?"

"No."

"Why not?"

"Why not?"

"Yes."

"It's very simple. If we were to capture him openly, we would have to turn him over to General Clinton. That would take his punishment entirely out of my hands. I want to inflict the punishment upon him, myself."

"Oh, that's it?"

"Yes."

"But how do you expect to capture him without attracting attention?"

"I don't know. I am simply going to wait for an opportunity."

"All right, we are with you, Hubbard. We know about how you feel in the matter. We know that all your comrades in that affair up at Albany were hanged, and that it is only natural that you should want revenge on the fellow who caused it all."

"You are right. I would have been hanged, too, if I had not succeeded in making my escape. I owe this fellow, Dick Slater, considerable, as you may well understand; and I always pay my debts."

"We don't blame you for wanting to do so, old man."

Utterly unconscious of his danger, Dick walked slowly onward up the street.

Presently he reached Trinity Church.

In front of the church were numerous benches.

On these benches were seated many people.

There were men, women and children, soldiers and sweethearts.

The soldiers paid no attention to anything that was going on around them, so had no eyes for Dick.

They were giving all their attention to their sweethearts.

Some of the other people glanced at Dick, however.

There was something in the appearance of the youth to attract attention.

Just as he came opposite the front of the church, a beautiful girl of about eighteen years of age caught sight of Dick and gave a start.

She looked at Dick, searchingly.

She rose quickly from the bench on which she had been sitting and started up the street in the same direction in which Dick was going.

Dick had got past the girl before she rose, and was, perhaps, ten feet in advance of her.

She walked more rapidly than Dick was walking and soon caught up with him.

She seemed to be paying no attention to Dick, but just as she was passing him she turned her head slightly and said, in a low tone, scarcely above a whisper:

"The bell is still ringing."

Dick gave a slight start, but otherwise gave no evidence that he had heard the girl's words.

He glanced at her out of the corner of his eye, however. The girl passed Dick without looking at him and walked on up Broadway.

She walked rapidly for only a short distance.

Then she lessened her pace and walked at a moderate gait.

Dick followed the girl.

He had increased his pace somewhat, but slackened it again when the girl began walking slower.

Dick was surprised.

He was in New York on a secret mission.

He had been sent by General Washington, the commander-in-chief of the Continental Army.

Dick was the bearer of important papers.

These papers were to be delivered into the hands of some one in New York.

Who this some one was, Dick did not know.

The commander-in-chief had not told Dick the person's name.

He had instructed Dick to go to New York City.

On a certain afternoon Dick was to walk up and down Broadway.

On the lapel of his coat he was to have a bit of blue ribbon pinned.

He was to walk up and down Broadway until some one approached him and spoke the words: "The bell is still ringing."

Dick had followed out his instructions to the letter.

He had made his way to New York City and had reached there the evening before.

The day on which we introduce Dick to the reader's notice was the one indicated by General Washington in his instructions to Dick.

Dick had started out about the middle of the afternoon and had put in a couple of hours on the street.

He had walked up and down Broadway a number of times.

He had begun to think that the person who was to greet him with the words above mentioned, and to whom he was to deliver the papers, was not to appear.

He began to fear that something had happened, and that he would have to return to Washington and report his mission a failure.

He felt relieved now, however.

His mission would be a success, after all.

The person who was to speak the words and receive the papers had appeared.

One thing surprised Dick greatly, however.

That was the fact that the person in question was a girl.

He had expected to be accosted by a man.

Dick was a soldier, however.

He had long since learned that it was not within the province of a soldier to be surprised at anything.

It is a soldier's duty to obey orders.

This, Dick was prepared to do.

Dick realized that the girl wished to lead him to some

spot where they would be free from observation, before receiving the papers.

This was only following the dictates of common sense and prudence.

The girl walked onward up Broadway.

Dick followed as closely as he could without being in danger of causing attention to be attracted.

Presently the girl turned to the left and walked westward, toward the river.

Dick turned down the street, also.

So did the four redcoats who were shadowing him.

There were not many people on this street.

Had Dick looked back and seen the redcoats his suspicions might have become aroused.

He did not look back, however.

His eyes were on the girl in front of him.

The girl walked about two blocks in this direction.

Then she turned to the right and went northward again.

The girl continued on in this direction a couple of blocks, and still onward to about the middle of the next block.

She paused in front of a door.

She pushed the door open.

As she did so she glanced back over her shoulder.

She saw Dick, who was only a few yards behind her.

She saw something else, too.

Something which caused her face to pale suddenly.

She saw the four redcoats stealing up behind Dick.

She knew from their actions that they were intending to attack the youth.

"Quick!" the girl cried. "This way! You are in danger!"

Instinctively Dick leaped forward.

As he did so he glanced back over his shoulder.

He was an old stager and knew that the danger must come from that direction.

He saw the four redcoats and knew from whom danger threatened.

Had Dick not had other business to attend to he would have faced the redcoats and offered them battle.

He had a duty to perform, however.

He was to deliver important papers into the hands of the girl, and he could not pause to enter into a combat with the redcoats.

In an instant, almost, he was at the doorway, and as the girl leaped through, he followed.

The redcoats leaped forward, also, and attempted to seize Dick.

They were too late, however.

The door went shut with a slam.

A bolt was shot into place.

The redcoats came against the door, with a crash!

CHAPTER II.

A DESPERATE STRUGGLE.

The door was a strong one.

It quivered and shook, but withstood the shock.

"Come!" the girl said, in a low tone.

As she spoke, she led the way up a flight of stairs, Dick following, closely.

"Do you think they will break the door down?" she asked, anxiously, when they reached the top of the stairs.

"It will be the worse for them if they do," said Dick, quietly.

He drew his coat back and tapped the butt of a pistol, significantly.

"Come," the girl said.

As she spoke she moved along the hallway.

Dick followed closely.

When they had gone perhaps halfway toward the rear of the building, a door at one side suddenly opened and a man leaped out and confronted them.

He was a large, heavily built fellow.

He was fierce-looking, evil-faced, and just now his eyes had the glare of a demon in them.

The girl uttered a cry of terror.

"Jim Black!" the girl exclaimed.

"Yes, Jim Black!" the man almost hissed. "So this is your lover, is it, Jennie Bunker? This is the feller thet's ter blame fur yer not likin' me, is it?"

Dick grasped the situation.

Jim Black was in love with this girl.

She was not in love with him.

The fellow was evidently hot tempered and jealous-hearted.

Dick felt intuitively that he was in for trouble.

The thought did not frighten him.

He felt capable of taking care of himself.

Of course, he was not eager for trouble.

He would have preferred to avoid it.

If forced upon him, however, he would meet it at least half way.

"You are mistaken," the girl said, in a trembling voice.

"He is not my lover. I have no lover; and as for my not liking you, he has had nothing to do with it. I simply do not like you, and that is all there is to it."

"Thet's er lie, an' I know et!" he man cried. "This feller's yer lover an'——"

"Hold!" cried Dick, sternly. "You are a beauty, aren't you? What do you mean, anyway, you black-muzzled ruffian, by talking in such fashion to a lady?"

"What's thet ye called me?" the fellow almost howled. "Oh, blazes! I'll fix ye fur thet! I'll kill ye just as sure as my name is Jim Black!"

The fellow fairly danced up and down he was so mad.

The girl shrank back.

She was terribly frightened.

Dick was cool and unruffled.

He was calm as a May morning.

He was watching the fellow closely.

"The best thing you can do," he said, quietly, "is to go about your business, if you have any."

"You think so?" with a leer.

"I do."

"Well, I'll tell ye what it is, young feller, I'm goin' ter 'tend ter my business, all right; but I am not goin' away to do et. My business is right here."

"You had better take my advice."

"When I want yer advice, young feller, I'll ax ye fur et. Ef ye knowed what is good fur ye, ye'd be gittin' away from here ez fast ez ye could."

"Is that so?"

"Et is."

"That's what you think."

"I know et."

"You think you do. You're not such a terrible fellow, are you?"

Dick's tone made the fellow angrier than ever.

"Ye'll fin' out whether I am er not! I'll break ye in two, an' throw ye out of ther window."

"You will?"

"Thet's just what I'll do!"

Dick laughed, scornfully.

He decided that he had wasted time enough on the fellow.

He stepped forward and snapped his fingers in the fellow's face.

"You are a braggart and a coward!" said Dick. "I dare you to lay a hand on me!"

The man was taken aback.

There was something about Dick that impressed him in spite of himself.

The youth had that peculiar air which betokened entire self-confidence and utter lack of fear.

Jim Black was not a coward, but his courage was more of the bull-dog, animal sort, while Dick was possessed of moral courage as well as physical.

Black was angry and jealous, anyway, and to be called a coward and dared by Dick was more than he could stand.

"Take that!" he hissed.

"That" was a blow from his huge fist.

Quick as a flash Dick darted to one side, easily avoiding the blow.

Then he caught the fellow by the wrist, and, giving him a shove, sent him reeling back against the wall.

This feat astonished the fellow not a little.

He realized that Dick was phenomenally strong.

He had not supposed that the youth could handle him in any such fashion.

He was fifty pounds heavier than Dick, and had thought himself twice as strong.

He had learned better.

The knowledge only made him more angry, however.

He recovered his balance and leaped forward, with a snarl of rage.

"I'll make ye pay fur that, cuss ye!" he cried, fiercely.

"Jim Black don't 'low no man ter throw him aroun' like that!"

"If Jim Black can't help himself, he'll have to allow it," said Dick, coolly.

Then he met the rush of the angry man.

The girl had withdrawn a short distance along the hallway.

She had done this at Dick's suggestion.

This left plenty of room for action.

Dick supposed Black would try to strike him, would try to knock him senseless with those huge fists, but in this Dick was mistaken.

Black advanced with hands outstretched, his evident intention being to get hold of Dick and engage in a hand-to-hand encounter.

Knowing that he was heavier and believing that he was stronger, the fellow evidently thought he could make short work of Dick if he once got hold of him.

"All right," thought Dick, "if you want it that way you can have it that way. I think I shall be able to hold my own over you, all right."

Having so decided, Dick stood his ground.

He did not give an inch.

In an instant the two came together with a crash.

Black seized Dick around the waist and drew him up close, with the evident intention of squeezing the breath out of the youth.

This was a game two could play at, however.

Dick got the same hold that the other had secured.

He jerked Black forward and gave the fellow a squeeze that almost cracked his ribs.

It was a squeeze that a grizzly bear might have been proud of.

It hurt Black so badly and took him so by surprise, that he forgot to try to reciprocate.

"Ow!—ouch!" the fellow gasped.

This experience opened Black's eyes.

He now realized that he had caught a Tartar.

He would not have believed it possible that the youth was possessed of such strength, had he not had proof of the fact.

He set to work now to try to overpower Dick.

He struggled fiercely and made the best possible use of all his strength.

All to no avail.

Dick had secured at the very first and maintained an advantage over his opponent.

Black was tough, however.

Dick realized that if he overcame the fellow soon, he would have to employ more severe measures.

The youth knew how to fix his opponent.

There was one hold, which, if he could secure it, would speedily put the fellow hors de combat.

That was the throat-hold.

Dick had wonderfully strong fingers.

Their grip was like steel.

If he could once get them on the throat of his opponent the fellow would have to succumb very quickly.

Dick began maneuvering to secure this hold.

Presently he was successful.

He got a good grip on Black's throat.

As he did so he looked the fellow straight in the eyes and smiled, coldly.

"It's all up with you, Black, my boy," he said. "I have you dead to rights now."

Black seemed to realize that this was true.

He felt that his situation was desperate.

He was game, however.

He would not give up until forced to do so.

He continued to struggle.

He fought with the desperation of despair.

It availed him nothing, however.

He could not break Dick's hold, and as the youth was compressing his windpipe so tightly, he could not get his breath.

His case was hopeless.

He grew weak and weaker.

His face grew red, then black.

The veins stood out like whipcords.

He struggled fiercely in an attempt to get his breath.

He was unable to succeed.

Dick held on with grim determination.

Presently Black succumbed.

He sank to the floor, limp and helpless.

He was unconscious.

At this instant a crash was heard in the direction of the front stairway.

"Those men have burst the door down!" the girl cried, in terror. "Come, quick! Follow me! Your life is in danger if you remain here another instant!"

CHAPTER III.

HARD BESET.

The girl ran along the hall toward the rear of the building.

Dick followed.

The tramping of feet was heard on the stairs.

At the farther end of the hall was another flight of stairs.

The girl hastened downward, followed closely by Dick.

At the bottom was a hallway running to the right and to the left.

The girl turned to the right and continued along the hallway till she reached its extreme end.

Taking a key from her pocket she unlocked a door in front of which she stood.

She threw the door open.

"Enter, quick," she said to Dick, "before the men come and discover you."

Dick obeyed.

He entered the room.

The girl followed quickly and closed the door and locked it.

She pushed a couple of bolts into their sockets, also.

"There," she said, with a sigh of relief, "I don't think they will get in here in a hurry."

Dick glanced around him.

He noted that he was in a fairly good-sized room.

It was poorly furnished, however.

Then he turned and looked at the girl, inquiringly.

Footsteps were heard in the hall outside.

The girl placed her finger on her lips, and, beckoning to Dick, led the way into an adjoining room, a room back of the one they were in.

She closed the connecting door.

"Now we can talk without being overheard," she said.

"Very well," said Dick. "I judge that the first thing for me to do is to deliver those papers to you."

As Dick spoke he drew the papers out of his pocket and extended them toward the girl.

Jennie Bunker placed her hands behind her and shook her head.

"I don't want the papers," she said.

Dick was surprised.

"You don't want them?" he asked.

"No."

"Why not?"

"Because I am not entitled to them."

Dick stared in amazement.

"You are not?"

"No."

"You gave the correct signal."

"I know I did."

"Then why are you not entitled to the papers?"

"For the reason that I am not the person who was to give you the signal."

Dick was amazed.

"You are not the person!" he exclaimed.

"No."

"Then how did you know what the signal was, and how to recognize the person to whom it was to be given?"

The girl smiled, faintly.

"I will tell you all about it," she said. "But first you are a patriot, are you not?"

Dick nodded.

"I am," he replied.

"You came here from General Washington?"

"I did."

"Well, there is a traitor in the camp."

"A traitor!"

"Yes."

"How do you know?"

"I have seen him."

"You have seen him?"

Dick hardly knew what to say or think.

"I have."

"Where?"

"Here."

"Here?"

"Yes; in this room."

Dick was becoming interested.

"When did you see him?"

"Yesterday evening."

"Yesterday evening?"

"Yes, first; and again to-day at about noon."

"Why did he come here?"

"He came to see my father."

"Ah! Why did he come to see your father?"

"He wished my father to help him."

"Help him to do what?"

"Secure those papers you have."

"Ah!"

Dick began to understand, now.

There was or had been a traitor in the patriot camp.

He had learned that Dick had come to New York, bringing important papers.

Doubtless he had come to New York with the intention of trying to get the papers away from Dick, so that he might sell them to the British commander-in-chief.

But who could the traitor be?"

"It must be one of Washington's orderlies," thought Dick. "No one else could have overheard the commander-in-chief tell me what the words were that would be spoken to me by the person to whom I was to deliver the papers."

Dick turned his eyes toward the girl.

"You saw this man, you say?" he asked. "Please describe his appearance, as nearly as you can."

"I can do better than that," the girl said. "I can tell you his name."

"Good!" exclaimed Dick. "What is it?"

"Carlton. At any rate, that is what he said his name was."

Dick started.

"I know him," he said. "That is his name."

Dick was surprised and somewhat mystified as well.

Carlton was not an orderly.

He was a soldier in the ranks.

How had he learned the words which were to be spoken by the person to whom Dick was to deliver the papers?

This was a mystery.

It was one which Dick could not fathom.

He knew Carlton well.

Carlton was a dark-faced, sullen sort of fellow.

He was a bully by nature.

Dick had had some trouble with Carlton.

He had taken the part of a young fellow whom Carlton was bullying, and had given the bully a thrashing.

This had happened several months before, and Dick had almost forgotten it.

He remembered it now, however.

"What did this man wish with your father?" asked Dick.

"He wanted my father to help get the papers away from you."

"Oh, that was it?"

"Yes."

"I see. He wished your father to watch for me on the street, give me the signal and secure the papers?"

"Yes; he said you would recognize him."

"Exactly. And did your father agree to do the work?"

The girl's face saddened.

"Yes," she replied, in a low tone. "He agreed to do the work."

"How did you learn all this?" asked Dick. "Did they talk it over before you?"

The girl shook her head.

"No," she said, "they were in here, while I was in the other room. They did not know I overheard their conversation."

"I see. And then you made up your mind to spoil the fellow's game, did you?"

"Yes; I did not wish my father to take part in such an affair."

"Your father is a Tory?"

"He is."

"And you?"

"I think the people of America ought to be free!"

"Good!" exclaimed Dick. "You are a patriot!"

"I am!"

Dick pondered a few moments.

Then he said:

"I must not delay, here, longer. The person to whom I am to deliver the papers will be looking for me in vain, and may become discouraged and give it up."

The girl's face fell, slightly.

Then she said:

"You are right; but I had better describe my father's appearance."

"That is right; otherwise I might deliver the papers to your father, after all."

"True."

Then the girl described her father's appearance.

Dick was sure he would have no difficulty in recognizing the man from the girl's description.

"I must go now," said Dick; "but before I do so I must thank you for what you have done."

"No thanks are necessary," the girl said. "I am only too glad that I have been able to do something to aid the great cause of Liberty. Then, too, you know I had a personal interest in the matter, and it was really my duty to do what I have done."

"I thank you just the same," said Dick; "and now I will be going."

"I fear you cannot go at once," the girl said.

"Why not?"

"On account of those redcoats. They broke the front door down and entered the building, as you remember."

"Yes; but we haven't heard anything of them since."

They have probably given up the search for me and gone away."

At this instant there came the sound of loud rapping on the door of the other room.

"There they are now!" the girl exclaimed, paling, slightly. "It is too late; you cannot escape!"

Dick looked sober.

"Is there no other way of leaving these rooms save by that door?" he asked.

"I think not," the girl replied.

"Then I shall have to wait till those fellows get tired and go away."

There was a very serious look on the girl's face.

"Or until they break the door down," she said.

"Do you think they can do that?" asked Dick.

"They broke the front one open."

"So they did; but this is a stronger one, is it not?"

"Yes; but not enough stronger to keep them out, I am afraid."

At this instant a voice was heard.

"Open the door!" the voice cried.

"I'll go and see if I can't get them to go away," the girl said.

She opened the door and passed into the front room.

Dick followed, stepping lightly so as to make no noise.

As they entered the room the cry was repeated:

"Open the door!"

The girl started, and looked toward Dick, with a look of terror on her face.

"That is Jim Black's voice," she whispered.

Dick nodded.

He had recognized the voice, also.

"It will be useless for you to say anything to try to get them to go away," he whispered to the girl. "That fellow will stay right where he is."

The girl nodded.

"He is a terrible fellow," she said. "You are in great danger."

Dick opened his coat and showed the girl four large dragoon pistols which were stuck in his belt.

"I think I shall be able to take care of myself," he said, quietly. "If they succeed in breaking that door down and enter this room, I will give them a warm reception."

At this instant there came a crash against the door.

It sounded as if several men had hurled themselves against the door.

Doubtless this was what had been done.

The door shook and rattled.

"It can't stand more than two or three more such assaults," whispered Dick. "You go in the other room. I

will take up a position in the doorway. Then if they break the door down I will fire two shots from my pistols and then leap back and close the door and bolt it. If I succeed in killing or wounding two or three of the fellows, they may become discouraged and go away."

"I hope so," the girl said, earnestly.

Then she went into the other room.

Dick took up his position in the doorway.

He drew two pistols and held them ready for instant use.

Crash!

Again the fellows had hurled themselves against the door.

It creaked and cracked.

Dick realized that another such assault would be too much for the door to withstand.

He set his teeth grimly, and waited.

"I'll make them wish they had gone about their business," he thought.

Crash!

Again the men had hurled themselves against the door.

This time it gave way.

Down it came, with a terrible crash.

Dick saw that the men were the four redcoats and Jim Black, the girl's lover.

As the door came down two of the redcoats fell forward into the room.

Up came Dick's pistols, quick as a flash.

Crack! Crack!

The two reports sounded almost as one—they were so close together.

Jim Black and one of the redcoats threw up their hands and reeled backward.

Without waiting to see how seriously wounded the men were, Dick leaped backward into the other room and closed the door with a slam.

He shot the bolts into place, and, then seating himself, quietly reloaded his pistols.

There was admiration in the girl's eyes as she watched Dick.

He was so cool and self-possessed as to inspire her with fresh courage.

He had just finished reloading his pistols when there came a rapping on the door, and a voice cried out:

"Open the door!"

"I'll do nothing of the kind," said Dick.

"You had better!"

"I don't think so."

"Open the door or we'll break it down as we did the other."

"Yes, and a couple more of you will get bullets in you as you did the other time, too," retorted Dick, promptly.

"We'll risk it. Open the door or we'll break it down!"

"Go ahead and break it down, then."

Suddenly a new voice was heard outside.

It was a loud and angry voice.

"Here! What is going on here?" the voice cried. "Who are you fellows, and what in blazes do you mean by breaking into my rooms in this fashion?"

"My father!" the girl exclaimed, in a low, frightened tone of voice.

CHAPTER IV.

"THE BELL IS STILL RINGING."

This would complicate matters considerably.

Dick wished that the girl's father had stayed away for a while longer, anyway.

The youth had no desire to hurt the man.

He felt under obligations to the girl, and for that reason would be sorry should it become necessary for him to shoot her father.

He stepped to the girl's side.

"By Jove! I wish there was some other way of getting out of here," he said, in a low tone. "I should hate awfully to hurt your father, but if they break that door down and enter, I may have to do so in self-defense."

The girl started and turned pale.

She looked down at the floor and seemed to be pondering.

Presently there came a crash at the door.

The girl gave a start, and said:

"There is a way of leaving this room. My father made me promise never to reveal the secret to any one, but I think I will be doing right in breaking my promise. Will you promise never to use the knowledge which you may become possessed of against my father?"

"Certainly," replied Dick. "I owe you such a debt of gratitude that I could not well refuse."

This satisfied the girl.

In the centre of the room was a good-sized rug.

The girl pulled the rug to one side.

Inserting a finger in a hole in the floor the girl pulled.

A trap-door came up, revealing a flight of stairs.

The girl motioned toward the stairs.

"Quick!" she whispered. "Go down."

Dick obeyed.

The girl followed, and with Dick's assistance eased the trap-door back down.

As they did so, a loud crash was heard.

The door opening into the room they had just left had been burst down.

Dick heard the girl fumbling about for a few moments.

Then she said: "Come," and led the way down the stairs.

"I fastened the door with hooks," the girl explained. "I don't think they will be able to get it open."

They were in a cellar.

They were in semi-darkness.

As his eyes became more accustomed to the semi-darkness, Dick looked about him, with interest.

He saw boxes of all sizes and kinds.

There were bales and bolts of cloth of various kinds. There was merchandise of nearly every kind imaginable.

Dick did not say anything, but he felt confident that he understood the situation.

He was in a storehouse for stolen goods.

The girl's father was probably a receiver of stolen goods.

Possibly he did something in the stealing line himself.

The sound of footsteps above their heads aroused Dick, however.

"Is there any way of getting out of here?" he asked.

"There is a door at the rear, but likely it is locked and the key gone," the girl said. "We'll see."

They hastened to the rear of the cellar and Dick tried the door.

It was locked.

He felt for the key.

It was gone.

The sound of stamping on the floor above was heard.

Then a voice roared out:

"Open the door, you hussy! Open it at once or it will be the worse for ye!"

It was the voice of the girl's father.

The girl made no move to obey.

"What shall we do?" she murmured, in a frightened tone.

"Do you know of no other way of getting out of here?" Dick asked.

"None. There are several windows, as you can see for yourself, but they are all heavily barred."

"We are under the rear of the building, are we not?"

"Yes; there is an alley, right up there."

"Doesn't the cellar extend clear to the front of the building?"

"I don't know. I suppose so. There's a board partition, and I don't know what lies beyond it."

"Let's take a look at it," said Dick; "perhaps we can get through."

They made their way in the direction indicated.

They soon reached what was evidently a partition separating one part of the cellar from the other.

The partition was made of boards.

The boards were of about an average width of ten inches.

"If I can find a board that is a little bit loose, we will be all right," said Dick.

He made his way slowly along the partition, testing each board, carefully.

The girl's father kept up a terrible thumping on the trap-door, and ordered that it be opened, but neither the girl nor Dick paid any attention.

Presently Dick uttered an exclamation:

"I've found a loose board!"

The girl gave utterance to a little cry of delight.

Dick pulled at the board with all his might.

It was not loose enough so that he could get a good hold, however, so he could not pull it away at once.

He would have to work it loose, gradually.

He kept working at it eagerly and energetically.

Presently an exclamation of satisfaction escaped Dick.

He had got the board loose enough so that he could get his fingers in behind it.

He gave a strong pull.

The board came loose at both top and bottom at the same time, and fell to the floor with a crash.

"Now we can get out of here. Quick! You go through and I will follow."

The girl obeyed.

She passed through the opening.

Dick followed.

At the same instant they heard a crash.

The trap-door had been burst through.

"Jove! They'll be after us in a jiffy. We'll have to hurry," said Dick.

He hastened across the cellar, the girl keeping close to his side.

They could hear the sound of excited voices in the portion of the cellar which they had just left.

The cellar extended clear to the front of the building, but Dick could see no means of escaping in that direction.

The portion of the cellar in which the stolen goods were stored was comparatively small.

It occupied only about half the width of the cellar and not a fourth of the length.

Looking back, Dick saw that there was another door at the rear end of the cellar.

Thinking it possible that this door might not be locked, Dick told the girl to follow him and hasten toward the door in question.

He tried the door.

It was locked.

But the key was in the lock.

He seized hold of the key and gave a twist.

It refused to turn.

Doubtless the door had not been unlocked for a long time, and the lock was rusty.

Excited voices could be heard in the direction of the partition wall—the one dividing the rear portion of the cellar from the front portion.

"They have found the opening!" thought Dick.

He tried the key again.

It refused to be turned.

Again he tried it.

With the same result.

The voices sounded louder and plainer.

Dick gave one terrific wrench on the key.

He was desperate.

This time he succeeded.

The key turned.

He turned the knob and pulled.

The door came open.

A cellarway was before them.

It led up to the alley.

Dick motioned for the girl to pass through the doorway.

She obeyed.

Dick pulled the key out of the lock.

He leaped through the doorway and pulled the door shut.

He inserted the key in the lock and turned it just as some one tried to open the door from the inside.

They had escaped from the cellar just in time.

Dick and the girl hastened up the steps.

At the top they found themselves in an alley.

The alley was narrow, with three and four-story buildings on each side.

"We'll have to hurry," the girl said. "They will go back upstairs and come out at the rear door on the first floor."

"It will take them two or three minutes to do that," said Dick. "Come, we will get away safely."

They started down the alley at a rapid pace.

They had gone but a few yards when the back door on the first floor of the building from which they had just escaped opened, and one of the redcoats appeared.

As his eyes fell upon Dick and the girl he uttered a yell, and, leaping out into the alley, started in pursuit.

Dick drew a pistol, and, pausing an instant, raised the weapon and fired.

The redcoats gave utterance to a wild yell of pain, and, dropping to a sitting posture in the middle of the alley, began howling, dismally.

Dick hastened onward after the girl.

They emerged from the alley before any one had started in pursuit, and, turning down the first street they came to, they made their way along at a more moderate pace.

"Where will you go?" asked Dick. "You will be afraid to return to your father?"

"Yes, indeed!" the girl replied. "He is a terrible man when angry. I know where I can go, however. I have a girl friend who will be glad to take me in."

"I will accompany you thither," said Dick.

Fifteen minutes' walk brought them to the home of Jennie Bunker's girl friend.

Dick thanked the girl, earnestly, for what she had done, and then bidding her good-by he hastened away.

The girl watched Dick until he disappeared around the corner, and then giving utterance to a sigh, she entered the house of her friend.

Dick was soon on Broadway, and had not walked two blocks before he heard a voice give utterance to the words:

"The bell is still ringing."

CHAPTER V.

THE ENCOUNTER IN THE LIVERY STABLE.

Dick turned his head.

A man was walking along almost beside him.

There was no one else near.

This man had uttered the words: "The bell is still ringing."

Dick was sure of this.

There was no one else near enough to have spoken the words in such a low tone.

Dick eyed the man closely.

He felt that it was necessary that he should do so.

The information which the girl had given him with regard to the fact that Carlton, the traitor, knew all about Dick's mission to the city, even to the secret signal which was to be given him, made it necessary that he should be very careful.

Dick was one of those individuals who possessed the faculty of being able to read a person's character almost at a glance.

He was not favorably impressed by the face of the man.

He did not like the fellow's looks.

There was something about him which filled Dick with a feeling of vague distrust.

"Is this the real person to whom I was to deliver the

papers?" Dick asked himself. "Or is he another tool of Carlton?"

Dick hardly knew what to think or do.

He felt that he must be very careful.

General Washington had given him to understand that the papers were of great importance.

This made the youth loth to part with them, until sure he was delivering them to the right party.

Dick wondered what the commander-in-chief would wish him to do under the circumstances.

Would he wish Dick to deliver the papers to any one who might give the signal, when there were outsiders who knew the signal?

Dick doubted it, somewhat.

If he were to do so, the papers might get into wrong hands.

The papers being of importance, the result might be disastrous.

Dick kept walking along, and at the same time he was thinking, swiftly.

He had given the fellow but the one glance, and then looked away again.

In his mind's eye he could see the fellow's face as plainly as if he were looking straight at him.

Dick realized that he must make a decision at once.

He must decide to give the papers to this man or to keep them until he could see Washington again and receive new instructions.

Dick decided that he would do the latter.

He decided to hold the papers.

"I will keep possession of them," he said to himself, "and will ride back to Washington's headquarters to-night and get new orders. I dare not deliver the papers to this man under the circumstances."

Having so decided, Dick meant to act as quickly as possible.

The first thing to do was to get rid of the fellow who had given the signal.

Dick quickened his footsteps.

He crossed the street at the first crossing and then turning again started back up Broadway.

As he turned up the street he glanced back out of the corner of his eye.

The fellow in question was crossing the street.

He was walking quite rapidly.

"He is following me," thought Dick. "I must get rid of him, somehow."

It was now getting along toward evening.

It was not yet dark, but soon would be.

Dick hastened onward.

As he walked, he unpinning the bit of blue ribbon which had served to identify him, and removed it from the lapel of his coat.

"I don't care to have any more people greet me with the words, 'The bell is still ringing,'" thought Dick. "I'm badly enough mixed as it is."

Dick now began using tactics well-calculated to throw the man who was following him off the track.

He turned down side streets a number of times and pursued a zig-zag, winding course.

He soon found that he had a hard task on his hands, however.

The man followed him, closely.

Dick could not shake the fellow off.

"He is certainly a persevering fellow," thought Dick. Dick was vexed.

He did not like the fellow's actions at all.

He had hoped that he would be able to get away from the fellow without much trouble.

Seeing that he could not do so, Dick made up his mind to fool away no more time.

"I will go to the livery stable, where I left my horse," thought Dick; "and once I am mounted and headed away from the city I guess I will be able to leave this fellow behind."

Dick quit pursuing a winding course.

He headed straight for the livery stable where he had left his horse.

He was soon there.

Entering the stable he gave orders that his horse be bridled and saddled.

While he was waiting for this to be done, the man who had followed him so persistently appeared at the entrance of the stable.

Dick appeared to be oblivious of the fellow's presence, but was watching him out of the corner of his eye, just the same.

The man walked boldly up to Dick, and touched him on the shoulder.

Dick decided upon his course.

He would pretend that he had no remembrance of ever having seen the fellow before, also if the fellow should say anything about the papers, Dick would pretend that he did not know what the man meant.

As the fellow touched Dick on the shoulder the youth turned his head.

He gave the fellow a look of mild inquiry.

"The bell is still ringing," whispered the man in Dick's ear.

Dick simulated a look of surprise.

"What bell?" he asked.

The man frowned.

"The bell is still ringing," he whispered again.

Dick put on a puzzled expression.

"Where is the bell, and why is it ringing?" asked Dick, with an innocent air.

The man frowned again.

"The bell is still ringing!" he repeated, in almost a fierce whisper.

"So you said before," remarked Dick. "But what have I to do with it? I can't help it, can I?"

The man made a gesture of anger and glared at Dick fiercely.

"The bell is still ringing," the man repeated once again.

"All right, let it ring," said Dick, calmly.

The man stamped his foot.

"Give me the papers!" he said, in a fierce tone.

Dick arched his eyebrows and looked surprised.

"What papers?" he asked.

"You know, well enough."

"Do I?"

"Yes. I want those papers!"

Dick looked the fellow straight in the eyes.

He was perfectly cool and self-possessed.

"I guess you have made a mistake, my friend," he said quietly. "I don't know what you are talking about."

"You say you don't?"

"I do not, and I don't believe you do."

The man was angry now.

His eyes flashed.

"I know what I am talking about," he hissed, "and so do you!"

"I beg your pardon, my friend, but you are mistaken."

Dick's tone was cool and calm.

"I am not mistaken. You were to hand me some papers."

Dick shook his head.

"I hate to dispute your word; but I know nothing about any papers."

It was evident that the man did not believe Dick.

"I know better!" fiercely. "You were to deliver some papers to me; but for some reason you have made up your mind not to do so. Those papers are mine, by right, and I am going to have them!"

Dick looked the fellow straight in the eyes, with a half-smile on his face.

"You talk positively, my friend," he said.

"I mean what I say, too!"

"Do you?"

"I do!"

"And so do I."

"Do you mean by that that you refuse to give me the papers?"

"I have no papers to give you."

"You deny that you have papers?"

"I deny your right to question me. I may have papers, but that is none of your business."

"Isn't it?"

The fellow's tone was fierce.

"It is not."

Dick's tone was calm and decided.

"I'll show you whether it is or not. Give me those papers, or it will be the worse for you!"

Dick did not like the man's tone and air.

A dangerous glint appeared in his eyes.

"See here, my friend," he said, in a cold, threatening tone, "you are getting altogether too insolent. If you don't want to get yourself into trouble you had better go quietly off about your business."

This made the man agrier than ever.

"You insolent young scoundrel!" he grated. "You have those papers, and you have got to hand them over to me! Give them to me, instantly!"

The man made a motion as if to seize Dick.

He met with a surprise.

Dick seized him by the arm and hurled him backward.

The fellow reeled and almost fell.

He had not been expecting anything of this kind.

He had doubtless sized Dick up as being an ordinary youth.

The probabilities were that he was a fellow who had considerable faith in his own prowess.

No doubt he thought he would be more than a match for a youth like Dick.

The strength of arm shown by Dick was quite a surprise to him.

It made him madder than ever.

It was a surprise to him.

He leaped forward, with a snarl of rage.

"I'll knock you senseless and take the papers away from you!" he grated.

Doubtless he thought he could do this.

Which proved he did not know Dick Slater.

Had he known Dick, he would have known that what he threatened to do would be no easy task.

He was soon to discover this, however.

As he leaped forward he struck at Dick, viciously.

Had the blow landed it would have felled Dick.

But it did not land.

Dick ducked to one side and the fellow's fist went over his shoulder.

Quick as a flash out shot Dick's fist.

It caught the fellow fair between the eyes.

It was a powerful blow.

Down went the fellow, with a crash.

He was not knocked senseless, but was temporarily dazed by the shocks of the blow and the fall.

He lay there for a few moments, winking and blinking.

Doubtless he saw more stars than he had seen in a long time.

Presently the dazed feeling left him.

He struggled to a sitting posture, and then on up to his feet.

He stared at Dick, with a look of mingled rage and amazement.

"D-did y-you h-hit m-me?" he stammered.

"Do you feel as if you had been hit?" asked Dick, quietly.

"Yes, I hit you; and if you don't go along about your business I shall probably hit you again."

"You'll hit me again?"

"I will; and next time I will hit you hard."

As Dick finished speaking the man leaped forward and struck at him.

He thought to take the youth by surprise.

But he did not do so.

Dick was watching him closely.

He noted the flash that came into the man's eyes, and knew what it portended.

He knew the blow was coming, almost as soon as the man himself.

He brushed the man's fist aside, with the greatest ease.

Then Dick's fist shot out once more.

Crack!

Dick's fist landed on the fellow's jaw.

Down the man went, with a thump.

This time he was unconscious.

The blow had knocked him senseless.

"Here's your horse, sir."

It was the hostler who spoke.

Dick turned.

His horse stood there, bridled and saddled.

"How much do I owe you?" asked Dick.

The man named a sum.

Dick paid it.

Then he mounted his horse and rode out of the livery stable and up the street.

"I wonder if this here feller's dead?" the hostler soliloquized as he gazed down upon the fallen man. "Jove! that other feller must have hit him an awful crack!"

The hostler brought some water and threw it into the man's face.

He gave a gasp and came to.

"Git up," said the hostler.

The other obeyed.

He struggled to a sitting posture and then to his feet.

He gazed around as if looking for somebody.

"Where is he?" he asked.

"You mean the feller that hit ye?"

"Yes."

"Oh, he's gone."

A look of disappointment and anger appeared on the man's face.

"Which way did he go?" he asked, eagerly.

"Up the street."

The hostler made a gesture to indicate the direction.

Without a word the man rushed out of the stable.

"I know where the young scoundrel is going," he muttered. "I know what he intends doing; but I will fool him yet. I will have those papers!"

CHAPTER VI.

PLANNING TO CATCH DICK.

The man hastened down the street.

He hurried along until he came to a tumble-down building over toward the river.

He entered this building.

There were three men in the room which he entered.

The three looked at the newcomer, inquiringly.

"Well," cried one, "did you get the papers?"

"Great guns! what is the matter with your face?" said one of the other two.

"It's terribly swollen," from the other.

The man paid no attention to the two last speakers.

He answered the first speaker.

"No, I didn't get the papers," he growled.

"What!"

As the other uttered the exclamation he leaped to his feet.

There was a look of anger and disappointment on his face.

"Do you mean to tell me you didn't get the papers?" he went on.

"That's just what I do mean to tell you."

"But what was the matter? Didn't you see Dick Slater?"

"Yes, I saw him. At any rate, I saw a fellow with a blue ribbon pinned to his coat."

"Did you repeat the signal words?"

"Yes."

"And didn't he give you the papers?"

"No."

"Why not?"

The man laughed, harshly.

"Ask him," he said. "I'll never tell you."

"What did he do when you gave him the signal?"

"What did he do?"

"Yes."

"He turned his head and looked at me."

"Didn't he say anything?"

"Not a word."

"Humph! What did he do next?"

"He looked away again."

"And he made no move toward giving you the papers?"

"Not a move, Carlton."

The man addressed as Carlton was silent for a few moments.

"Strange that he didn't offer to give you the papers," he said, presently. "He was to deliver the papers to the person giving the signal. That much, I know; and I don't see why he didn't do it. What did he do?"

"He kept right on walking down the street."

"And you let him go?"

Carlton's tone was fierce.

"No, I didn't let him go."

"Ah! you stopped him?"

"No."

"What did you do, then?"

"I followed him."

"Ah! Did you catch him?"

The man pointed toward his bruised and swollen face.

"Don't that look as if I caught him?" he asked, ironically.

Carlton glanced at the man's face.

The expression on his own face showed that he understood.

"I see," he said. "You did catch him."

"Yes, I caught him."

"Where?"

"In a livery stable."

Carlton started.

"In a livery stable?"

"Yes."

"Why did he go there?"

"To get his horse."

"Ah! to get his horse, eh?"

"Yes."

"Did you have any conversation with him?"

"I did."

"What did you say to him?"

"I repeated the signal words."

"The bell is still ringing?"

"Yes."

"And what did he say?"

"He said he couldn't help it."

Carlton nodded.

"That's Dick Slater, up and down," he said. "He pretended he did not know what you meant, eh?"

"Yes."

"I see. He was suspicious of you and had made up his mind not to give you the papers, so he decided that his best course was to profess ignorance of your meaning."

"I guess you're right."

"What did you do, then?"

"I told him that he knew what I meant, and demanded that he give me the papers."

"Ah! And what did he do?"

"He said that he had no papers for me."

"That's just like him. He had made up his mind not to let you have them."

"There is no doubt regarding that."

"And did you let it end that way?"

The man laughed, shortly.

"No, I didn't," he said.

"What did you do?"

"I told him I wanted those papers, and that I was going to have them."

A peculiar look appeared in Carlton's eyes.

"But you didn't get them," he remarked.

"No, I didn't get them."

"Why not?"

"Why not?"

"Yes."

"Because I couldn't."

"You tried, then?"

"Yes, I tried."

"What happened?"

A vicious look appeared on the man's swollen countenance.

"I guess you know what happened," he said. "I got two of about the hardest thumps I ever received in my life."

"That is what ails your face, then?"

"Yes, that's what ails my face."

"Did you punish him any?"

There was an eager look on Carlton's face.

The other shook his head.

"No, I never touched him."

Carlton looked disappointed.

"I was in hopes you had got in one good lick on him, anyway," growled Carlton. "I hate the fellow!"

A look of understanding appeared on the face of the other.

"I guess you have felt the weight of his fist," he said, significantly.

"Yes, I have," acknowledged Carlton. "He is the only man who ever got the better of me in a fight."

"I wish you had told me that before."

"Why?"

"I would have been more careful."

"You held him too cheaply, eh?"

"Yes, I thought I could handle him easily, and was careless."

"I see; you would have stood no chance with him, however."

"Maybe not; but I wouldn't have been taken so much by surprise."

"How did the affair end?"

"In my downfall. He knocked me down twice, and the second blow rendered me unconscious. When I came to he had mounted his horse and gone."

Carlton looked interested.

"Which way did he go, do you know?"

"The hostler said he went up the street to the northward."

Carlton pondered a few moments.

"I wonder where he can be going," he remarked, presently.

"I'll wager that I know," the man said.

"Where?"

"Back to General Washington for fresh orders."

Carlton started.

"Do you think so?" he asked.

"I do."

"What makes you think so?"

"It is the natural thing for him to do. For some reason he has become suspicious, and the first thing he would think of, after refusing to deliver the papers, would be to get back to Washington, make his report, and get new orders."

"I guess you're right," agreed Carlton. "I have an idea that is just what he is going to do. You say he went north when he left the livery stable?"

"So the hostler said."

"Good! Then he is going to a ferry somewhere up the river. If we work it right we may be able to get those papers yet."

"By crossing the river at the Paulus Hook Ferry and heading him off as he comes back southward?"

"Yes."

"That is the very plan I had thought of."

"It will work, I am sure."

"Yes; if we can only strike the road traversed by him on his trip southward."

"I know the road he'll take, all right!" declared Carlton.

"I am confident we will be able to get to the road in time to head him off, too."

"We had better hurry, then."

"We'll have to have horses, won't we?" one of the other men asked.

"Of course," replied Carlton.

"Where will we get them?"

"At any livery stable. I know where there is one not far from here. Come, let's be going."

Carlton led the way out of the house, the other three following.

They made their way down the street, a distance of perhaps a block and a half.

Here they paused and entered a livery stable.

They asked if they could be furnished with saddle horses.

The livery stable man said they could.

"Get the horses ready for us quickly as possible, then," Carlton ordered.

The horses were ready within ten minutes' time.

The four men mounted and rode out of the stable and away.

They soon reached the Paulus Hook Ferry.

They rode onto the ferryboat and were taken across the river.

Leaving the boat, they rode away in almost a due westerly direction.

They kept on until they reached a well-traveled road, extending in a north and south direction.

"This is the road he will travel over," said Carlton. "All we have to do now is to find a good place for an ambushade. I think I know the place, too. Follow me."

Carlton turned his horse's head toward the south.

He rode away at a gallop, followed by his companions.

A fifteen-minute ride took them to a strip of timber.

Here Carlton ordered a halt.

"This will do nicely," he said. "We can hide in the timber here beside the road and riddle Dick Slater with bullets as he comes riding up!"

Carlton spoke viciously.

His tone proved that he would have no compunctions about putting his words into effect.

The four men dismounted and led their horses back into the timber.

They tied the animals to trees and, returning to the edge of the timber, took up their positions by the roadside.

It was now quite dark.

There was no moon, but the stars shone brightly.

The four men waited, patiently.

Perhaps two hours elapsed.

Then the sound of hoofbeats was heard.

"He is coming!" said Carlton, in a low, fierce tone.

The men drew their pistols and cocked them.

Then they awaited the approach of the horseman.

Whoever the newcomer was, he was advancing into deadly danger.

CHAPTER VII.

DICK RETURNS TO THE PATRIOT ENCAMPMENT.

When Dick left the livery stable and rode up the street, he kept right straight on toward the north until he came to the Common.

Crossing the Common, he entered a road leading toward the north.

Dick urged his horse into a gallop.

He continued in this direction for perhaps an hour.

Then he turned toward the west and soon reached the Hudson River.

At the point where Dick reached the river there was a small ferryboat.

Dick had crossed the Hudson River at this point a number of times before and knew that the owner of the boat was a patriot.

He could cross here in perfect safety.

Indeed, he had crossed here the evening before, in coming to the city.

Dick dismounted at the river bank and led his horse onto the boat.

A man came forward and greeted him.

"Hello, Dick!" he said. "Going back so soon?"

"Yes, Jim; take me over at once, will you?"

"All right."

The man went to work and soon had the boat moving.

It took nearly half an hour to cross the river.

When they reached the other side, Dick offered to pay the man for ferrying him over, but the man wouldn't have anything.

"Not from you, Dick," he said. "Et's all right; good-by, an' good luck to ye."

"Good-by, Jim!"

Dick mounted his horse and rode away.

He rode in a westerly course a mile or so.

Then he turned and rode toward the south.

He rode in this direction perhaps an hour and a half, when suddenly, just as he was approaching a strip of timber, his horse gave a snort of affright and leaped out to one side of the road.

At the same instant there was a flash at the edge of the timber.

There came the crack! crack! crack! of firearms.

Dick heard the whistling of bullets.

The action of the horse in leaping to one side had, no doubt, been the means of saving Dick's life.

As it was the bullets came uncomfortably near.

Dick realized that he had run into an ambush.

He had no suspicion that the men who had waylaid him were the men who had been causing him so much trouble in New York City.

He supposed they were highwaymen or robbers.

Dick had been taken completely by surprise.

He was a youth, however, who always had his wits about him.

It was not his way to become rattled.

He had been taken by surprise, but now he knew the worst.

Dick was prompt to think and prompt to act under any and all circumstances.

He urged his horse forward, with voice and spur.

Dropping the reins he drew a pistol with each hand.

Crack! crack!

He fired two shots into the thicket at the point where he had seen the flash of the firearms.

Thrusting the pistols back into his belt he drew two more.

Crack! crack!

Again he had fired, and this time with some effect.

A wild yell of pain went up from the thicket.

Then there came the answering crack of firearms.

Dick heard one or two bullets whistle past him.

Luckily, however, none of the bullets hit him.

Onward down the road dashed Dick's horse.

The youth was out of range of his enemies' pistols in a jiffy.

He had escaped from the trap which had been set for him.

"I placed my mark on one of them, anyway," thought Dick, with a feeling of satisfaction.

He dismissed the matter from his mind and rode onward at a goodly pace.

He reached the patriot encampment at about one o'clock in the morning.

He decided to wait till morning before reporting to Washington.

He went to the quarters occupied by the "Liberty Boys" and managed to lay down without arousing any of them.

He was up bright and early.

So were all the "Liberty Boys."

They were glad to see Dick back.

They began asking him eager questions.

"I haven't time to talk now, boys," he said; "I will see you later. I must go and report to General Washington."

"Do you suppose he is up yet, Dick," asked Bob Estabrook, a handsome young fellow of about Dick's age.

"Yes, he's up and has had his breakfast by this time," replied Dick. "There are few earlier risers than the commander-in-chief."

Dick did not wait to eat breakfast.

He hastened to the house occupied by General Washington.

"Is the commander-in-chief up?" he asked of the orderly who answered his knock.

"Yes; he has just finished breakfast. Do you wish to see him?"

"I do, and at once."

"This way."

The orderly led the way along the hallway, and, throwing open the door, announced:

"Dick Slater, your excellency."

Dick entered the room.

General Washington was seated at a table examining some papers.

He looked up and greeted Dick with a smile.

"Good morning, Dick, my boy," he said. "You got back safely, I see."

"Yes, your excellency."

"Sit down, Dick."

Washington indicated a chair.

Dick sat down.

Washington looked at Dick's face, keenly.

"What was the trouble that you didn't deliver the papers, Dick?" he asked, quietly.

Dick started and looked somewhat surprised.

"How did you know I didn't deliver them?" he asked.

A half-smile appeared on Washington's face.

"I read it in your face," he said. "You have come to me and reported your success in many undertakings which I have sent you upon, and your face always wore an entirely different expression from the one which rested upon

it just now. I knew you had failed the instant I saw you. What was the trouble, Dick?"

Dick went ahead and told the commander-in-chief all. Washington listened attentively.

"So Carlton is a traitor!" he exclaimed, when Dick had finished. "I understood that he had disappeared."

"Yes, he is a traitor," replied Dick. "But the question is, how did he become possessed of the knowledge of the signal words which were to be spoken to me?"

Washington looked thoughtful.

"I can think of only one way that he could have learned it, Dick," he said, presently.

"And that, your excellency?"

"From one of my orderlies."

The commander-in-chief spoke in a calm, deliberate tone of voice.

At this instant Dick's quick ear detected a faint sound at the door.

The youth leaped to his feet and with a single bound had his hand on the door-knob.

He jerked the door open.

The orderly was in the hallway in a bent-over position. He had had his ear to the keyhole.

Dick seized the orderly by the coat-collar, and jerking him into the room closed the door.

"Bring him here, Dick," said Washington.

His tone was cold and stern.

The commander-in-chief pointed toward the chair.

Dick forced the orderly to become seated.

Washington fixed his keen, blue eyes on the face of the orderly.

"Jenkins, you were listening!" he said.

His tone was quiet and calm, but very stern.

The man paled.

"N-no, y-your e-excellency, I w-wasn't——"

"That will do! Lying will not help you!" interrupted the commander-in-chief. "Jenkins, I am going to ask you something, and I wish a truthful answer."

"Y-yes, y-your ex-excellency."

"Did you tell one of the soldiers—a fellow named Carlton—that Dick, here, was to deliver valuable papers to some one in New York City, and that the papers would be delivered to a person who would utter certain words?"

The orderly paled even more.

"I—I n-never t-told any——"

Washington made a gesture.

"That will do!" he said, peremptorily; "you told him, and you told him what the signal words were! No one else could have told him, for no one else save yourself could have been where he could overhear me tell Dick the

words. Jenkins, do you know what will be your fate, as punishment for your traitorous conduct?"

Jenkins seemed to have an idea that his punishment would be a severe one, for he was almost paralyzed with fright.

He clasped his hands and fell upon his knees.

He began to plead, wildly and incoherently, and protest his innocence of wrongdoing.

The face of the commander-in-chief hardened.

"Take him away, Dick," he said, with a wave of the hand. "Take him and turn him over to the keeper of the prisoners, and then return to me."

"Very well, your excellency."

Dick escorted the orderly to the building used as a prison, and turned him over to the keeper.

"Be careful not to let him escape," said Dick.

And then he told the keeper what the offence was that the man had been guilty of.

"I'll see to it that he doesn't get away, Dick," the keeper replied.

Then he marched Jenkins off to a cell.

Dick returned to General Washington.

"Of course you have the papers yet, Dick," the commander-in-chief remarked.

"Yes, your excellency."

"Good! I supposed you had."

General Washington was silent for a few moments, during which time he looked down at the floor as if in a deep study.

Presently he looked up.

"Those papers must be delivered, Dick," he said; "and as the first plan for delivering them failed, we will have to try another."

"I am ready to try any plan you may suggest, your excellency."

"I am sure of that, Dick. And now I will tell you what we will do. Those papers are important documents and are to be sent to France. The man with whom I have been dealing, and who represents the French Government, did not wish the papers taken direct to him by my representative—yourself. He feared that you might be shadowed by representatives of the British, and that this might cause him trouble, as he is living in safety under an assumed name; so at his request I consented to make delivery of the papers to a representative of his in the manner in which you attempted to deliver them yesterday afternoon. Now, however, you will have to take the papers direct to him, and he will have to take the chances of trouble coming to him as a result."

"Very well, your excellency. I will take the papers to you."

"Good! I will give you his name and address. I will write it down so that no eavesdropping ears may overhear." Washington wrote a few words on a slip of paper and handed it to Dick.

Dick glanced at the paper and saw, written thereon:

"M. LOUBET, 38 Maiden Lane."

Dick fixed the name and address in his mind, and then tore the paper up and threw the bits into the waste-basket. "You will not forget the name and address?" queried Washington.

"No, your excellency."

"Very good. When will you start on your return to New York?"

"As soon as I have had my breakfast, sir."

"Good! Good-by, Dick, and good luck to you."

"Good-by, your excellency."

Washington shook hands with Dick, and then the youth saluted and withdrew.

Breakfast was ready when Dick got back to the "Liberty Boys'" headquarters.

"You are just in time, old man," said Bob Estabrook.

"I am glad of that," replied Dick. "I am as hungry as a bear."

Dick and the "Liberty Boys" ate breakfast with a relish. They were all healthy and hearty and had good appetites. Dick was captain of the company of "Liberty Boys."

The company was made up of young fellows of about Dick's age.

The "Liberty Boys" had done good work during the four years they had been in the patriot ranks.

General Washington had more than once remarked that if he had ten thousand such troops as the "Liberty Boys" he could drive the British into the ocean.

Then, too, Dick and Bob had done splendid work as spies and scouts in addition to their work as soldiers in the ranks.

Dick Slater was the most famous spy of the Revolution. He had done more daring things, had penetrated into the line of the British more times, had secured more valuable information than any other three spies.

For this reason Washington valued him highly.

Whenever there was an important piece of spy work to be done, Dick was always selected for the task.

He had never yet failed to acquit himself with credit.

Although he had failed to deliver the papers in this last instance, he had acquitted himself creditably, for the rea-

son that he had been smart enough to keep the papers out of the hands of Carlton and his gang.

A messenger less intelligent than Dick would have delivered the papers to the man who had given Dick the signal, the afternoon before, on Broadway.

Dick had brains of his own and used them.

It was this fact that made him such a valuable man as a spy.

"You say you are going back to New York, this morning, Dick?" asked Bob, when they had finished eating breakfast.

"Yes, Bob."

"And you're going right away?"

"Just as soon as I can bridle and saddle my horse."

"Say, Dick, I am going with you."

Dick did not reply immediately.

He hesitated and seemed to be thinking.

"Don't you say, 'no,' Dick!" cried Bob, in a mock-threatening tone. "If you do, I'll lick you! If you don't want a fight on your hands, say, 'yes.'"

Dick smiled.

"All right, Bob, you may go along," he said. "I don't want to fight with any of my friends. If I must fight, I would rather fight the redcoats."

"Hurrah!" cried Bob. "Good for you, Dick! Say, I'm glad you are willing for me to go along with you; it will be lots more fun than sitting here in camp doing nothing."

The youths went out and saddled and bridled their horses.

Then they mounted and rode away toward the north.

CHAPTER VIII.

BACK TO NEW YORK.

The youths rode northward, at a moderate pace.

They reached the ferry across the Hudson at about eleven o'clock.

The boat was over on the east side.

Dick fired his pistol as a signal to the ferryman, and a few minutes later the boat was on its way across.

The boat soon reached the shore.

The ferryman was the same man who had brought Dick across the ferry the evening before.

He was acquainted with Bob, as well as with Dick.

He greeted both youths pleasantly.

"Hello! Going back to the city again, Dick?" he asked.

"Yes, Jim."

"All right; lead yer horses aboard, an' I'll take ye across the river."

The youths obeyed.

As soon as they were aboard, the ferryman started the boat.

The boat was not very large and the horses were heavy, so the progress was slow.

It took half an hour to cross the river.

The youths led their horses off the boat as soon as the shore was reached, and, mounting, said good-by to the ferryman and rode away.

They rode eastward a distance of perhaps half a mile, when they came to a well-traveled road.

This was what was known as the old Bloomingdale road.

The youths entered this road, turning their horses' heads toward the south and rode onward in the direction of New York City.

They reached the city about one o'clock.

They went direct to a livery stable.

Leaving their horses they made their way down the street.

The youths were hungry.

"We'll have something to eat, Bob," said Dick, "and then we will attend to the business that brought us here."

"All right, Dick; I am as hungry as a bear."

"So am I."

The youths entered a tavern.

They went into the dining-room and ordered dinner.

When it had been served, they ate heartily.

When they had finished they paid their score and left the tavern.

They made their way down the street.

Dick did not know exactly where Maiden Lane was, but he felt sure he could find it.

He thought that it must be down in the lower part of the city.

They made their way in this direction as rapidly as possible.

As they walked down the street the attention of a Tory and some redcoat companions was attracted.

There were four in the party—the Tory and three redcoats.

They were on the opposite side of the street, but the street was not wide and they could see Dick's and Bob's faces distinctly.

"What luck!" the Tory said, in a low tone. "Yonder is that scoundrel, Dick Slater, that we shadowed yesterday afternoon, and whom we came so near getting. He's got a companion with him this time, but no matter, we'll shadow them both, for I'm bound to have revenge on that

fellow Slater. If the other fellow interferes, we'll kill him too. I believe he was with Slater up in Albany, anywa

The speaker was Hubbard, the leader of the band Tories that had made the attempt to assassinate General Schuyler, up in Albany, which scheme had been frustrated by Dick and Bob.

Dick and Bob did not notice the Tory and the redcoat so it was not difficult for them to follow the youths without being seen.

Dick inquired the way, once or twice, and presented they came to the street they were in search of.

"We must find Number Thirty-eight," said Dick. "There is Number Thirty. The number we are looking for is not far distant."

They made their way up the street and soon came to Number Thirty-eight.

This proved to be an office building.

In the hallway leading to the upstairs portion of the building, individual directory cards were tacked on the wall.

Dick paused and ran his eye over the collection of cards.

"Here it is, Bob," he presently remarked.

He pointed to one of the cards as he spoke.

On the card, written in a bold hand, was the following

"M. LOUBET, Att'y, Room 90."

"Come on," said Dick.

He led the way upstairs, Bob following.

By the time they had reached the landing at the top of the stairs the Tory and the three redcoats appeared at the entrance to the hallway.

They peered up the stairway.

The youths, entirely unconscious of the fact that they were being shadowed, made their way along the hallway upstairs.

They looked at the numbers above the doors, in search of room ninety.

At last they found it.

It was the last room on the left-hand side.

It was at the extreme end of the hall.

On the door was another card like the one at the foot of the stairs in the hallway below.

Dick rapped on the door.

There came no sound from within the room.

Dick rapped again.

Still there was no reply.

"He must be out," said Bob.

Had they looked back down the hall, at the head of

stairs, they might have seen the faces of the Tory and his three redcoat companions.

They had come up the stairs far enough so that they could see Dick and Bob, and, stopping there, were watching the youths.

Dick rapped a third time.

There being no reply, Dick took hold of the door-knob and turned it.

He pushed against the door.

It opened.

The youths looked into the room.

It was empty.

It was not occupied.

"Suppose we go in, Dick," suggested Bob. "He will certainly be back soon, and we may as well wait for him here as anywhere."

"All right, Bob."

The youths entered the room.

Dick closed the door behind him.

The room was well furnished.

It had the appearance of an office room.

Along the walls were shelves, and on these shelves were books.

There was a table, several chairs and a sofa.

There was an adjoining room.

The door between the two was open, and the youths could see through.

This room was almost luxuriously furnished, and in one corner was a bed, proving that this was the private sleeping and sitting room of M. Loubet.

The youths sat down on the sofa.

"We might as well take it easy," said Bob.

"True, Bob," agreed Dick.

"It seems to me that M. Loubet is a trifle careless to go away and leave his door unlocked."

"That is proof that he has not gone far, Bob."

"I guess you are right about that."

The youths conversed carelessly for a few moments, and then, as footsteps were heard the hallway, Bob said:

"There he comes, now."

The next instant the door opened and the Tory, Hubbard, and the three redcoats entered the room quickly.

Dick and Bob stared at the intruders in surprise.

Dick took alarm instantly, however.

The red uniforms were enough to cause him alarm.

He gave Bob a quick signal.

Then with a single bound he was across the room.

Another bound carried him through the doorway and into the adjoining room.

Bob had understood the signal, and had followed Dick's lead, promptly.

They were in the adjoining room so quickly that the Tory and his companions were taken almost as much by surprise as the youths had been.

They were unable to make a movement to prevent the action of the youths.

Dick slammed the door shut.

He quickly shot the bolt.

Dick breathed a sigh of relief.

"There, I guess they won't get in here in a hurry," he said.

"Why didn't we stay and have it out with them, Dick?" asked Bob. "There were only four of them."

"I know, Bob. I have no doubt that we could have whipped the four, easily enough, but the firing would have attracted attention, a crowd would come, and in the crowd would have been lots of redcoats. Then we would have been in serious trouble."

"That's so; I never thought of that."

Thump! thump! thump!

One of the men in the adjoining room was pounding on the door.

"Open the door!" cried a fierce voice.

"You go down to the river and jump in!" called out Bob. "We'll open the door when we get ready and not before."

"Open the door or we'll break it down!" cried the voice.

"If you do, you'll wish you hadn't!" retorted Dick.

"There are two of us in here and each of us has four pistols. Out of eight shots, I guess we can bring two or three of you fellows down."

A hoarse growl of rage was heard.

"You wouldn't dare shoot!" the voice cried out.

"Why not?" asked Bob.

"Because you'd bring a crowd up here and they'd kill you sure."

"That may be," replied Dick; "but you fellows would know nothing about it. We would kill you before the crowd got here."

Dick's voice was grim and determined.

The men in the other room realized that he meant what he said.

They looked at one another in an uncertain, inquiring manner.

While they were still looking at each other in this manner, the sound of footsteps outside was heard.

Then the door opened and a medium-sized, dark-featured man entered.

When his eyes fell upon the Tory and the three redcoats he started back in amazement.

A look of consternation showed on his face for an instant. It was gone as quickly, however, and the man asked, in an imperious tone:

"Who are you, and what you are doing here in my apartments?"

"I—I beg your pardon, sir," stammered the Tory; "but we were chasing a couple of fellows and they took refuge in your rooms. We followed. They are in the other room."

"You will leave my rooms at once!" ordered the man.

There was something in the appearance of the man to impress the beholders, and the Tory and his companions left the room without a word.

They went with evident reluctance, however.

The man followed them to the door and watched them walk down the hall.

He remained in the doorway until the four disappeared down the stairs.

Then he stepped back into his room and closed the door.

"Jove! those redecoated rascals gave me quite a start," he murmured.

Then remembering what the man had said, with regard to there being some persons in his other room, the man walked to the door and rapped on it.

Dick and Bob had remained silent during the time that the man was talking to the four intruders, but now Dick asked:

"What is wanted?"

"I want you to open this door," came the reply.

"Who are you?"

"I am M. Loubet, the owner of these apartments."

"All right, I'll open the door at once."

Dick unbolted the door and threw it open.

In front of him stood a medium-sized, dark-complexioned man.

The man gazed at Dick and Bob, searchingly.

The youths returned the gaze, with interest.

"You say you are M. Loubet?" asked Dick, presently.

"I am," was the reply; "and now if you will be so kind, I would like to know who you are, and why you are here?"

"Wait a moment," said Dick, in a low tone.

Then he went to the door leading into the hall, opened it and looked out.

No one was in sight.

The Tory and redcoats had disappeared.

Dick closed the door and again confronted M. Loubet.

"You asked us who we were," said Dick, "and now I will answer your question. I am Dick Slater, and my companion is Bob Estabrook. We are patriot spies and mes-

sengers and we are the bearers of important papers which we are to place in the hands of M. Loubet. We came straight from General Washington, the commander-in-chief of the Continental army.

"Ah!" exclaimed M. Loubet.

CHAPTER IX.

DICK DELIVERS THE PAPERS.

M. Loubet looked at the youths, eagerly and searchingly.

"You say you have important papers for me from General Washington?" he asked.

"I have," replied Dick.

"Are you the messenger who was to have delivered some papers to my representative on Broadway, yesterday afternoon?"

"I am."

"How comes it then that you were not there?"

"I was there."

"You were?"

"Yes."

"Then why did not my man see you?"

"Describe the appearance of your man," said Dick. M. Loubet did so.

When M. Loubet had finished, Dick knew that the man who had followed him so persistently the afternoon before, and with whom he had had the encounter in the live stable, was not the man sent by M. Loubet.

The description did not tally with his appearance, at least.

Then Dick told M. Loubet the story of his experience the preceding afternoon, and explained why it was he had not delivered the papers.

M. Loubet said that Dick had done just right.

"You might have placed the papers in wrong hands," he said, "and that would have been a bad affair."

"So it would," agreed Dick.

"You have the papers with you now?" asked M. Loubet.

"I have."

The man went to the door, opened it and looked out into the hallway.

No one was in sight.

The Tory and the redcoats had evidently gone down upon the street.

M. Loubet closed the door and bolted it.

Then he turned toward the youths.

"I am ready to receive the papers," he said.

Dick drew a package from his inside coat-pocket.

He handed it to M. Loubet.
 The man took the package, eagerly.
 He opened the package and looked at the papers.
 "Yes, these are the papers, sure enough," he half murmured.
 M. Loubet placed the papers in a drawer of his desk and invited the youths to sit down.
 The youths seated themselves.
 M. Loubet entered into conversation with them, then. He asked them many questions, which Dick answered, conservatively.
 M. Loubet seemed to wish to get Dick's ideas regarding whether or not the people of America would be able to win in their fight for independence.
 Dick told M. Loubet that he thought they would.
 Dick was quite ready to do all he could to encourage the French to render all aid possible.
 After an hour of conversation, Dick and Bab bade M. Loubet good-by, and took their leave.
 "We want to look out for those fellows who followed us here," said Bob to Dick, as they started down the stairs.
 "You're right, Bob."
 "They are likely at the entrance to the hallway, ready to pounce upon us."
 "We'll keep our eyes open, Bob, and will be ready for them."
 "So we will. I hope I'll get to smack that Tory in that red mouth of his."
 The youths made their way down the stairs and approached the entrance to the hallway.
 They approached it, cautiously.
 Instead of stepping out upon the street, they took care to look out, first.
 They looked up and down the street.
 The Tory and redcoats were nowhere to be seen.
 Then they looked across the street.
 The men were not there.
 They had disappeared completely.
 "Oh, well, it is better, I suppose," said Bob; "but I did want to smack that Tory in the mouth," he added, in a disappointed tone.
 "You may get the chance yet, before we get out of the city, Bob."
 This was prophetic, but, of course, Dick did not know it.
 "Which way, Dick?" asked Bob.
 "I guess it doesn't matter which way we go."
 "Let's stay in the city a while, Dick. I haven't been here for some time, and would like to look around a bit."
 "All right, Bob, I'm willing."
 "We may be able to pick up some items of news."

"So we may."
 The youths turned to the left and walked slowly up the street.
 They did not care particularly in which direction they went.
 They would simply wander around the street, and see what they could see, and hear all that was possible.
 In this manner they might become possessed of considerable information which would be valuable to General Washington.
 By so doing they would be killing two birds with one stone.
 They had come to the city as messengers; now if they could do some spy-work while here they would be doing well.
 They strolled along.
 They were aware of the fact that there was danger in the course which they were pursuing.
 The city of New York was at that time the headquarters for the British, with their commander-in-chief, General Clinton, with headquarters there.
 The city was thronged with redcoats.
 The youths were likely to get into trouble at any moment.
 There were soldiers there who knew the youths by sight, and knew them to be famous patriot spies and scouts.
 Of course, it would be an accident should the youths encounter any of the redcoats who knew them; but such an accident might occur.
 Dick and Bob had not forgotten the Tory and his redcoat companions who had followed them up to the rooms occupied by M. Loubet.
 They kept a sharp lookout in all directions.
 Dick felt confident the fellows were not far away.
 The fact that the fellows could not be seen did not mislead him.
 He was of the opinion that the men were watching them from a distance.
 Bob was of the same opinion.
 "Perhaps we can throw them off the track, Dick," said Bob. "Let's walk rapidly and turn every corner we come to. I think by the time we have wound and twisted around through these crooked streets, half an hour or so, they will give up trying to follow us."
 "All right, Bob, we can try it."
 The youths quickened their pace.
 Occasionally they glanced back over their shoulders.
 On no occasion did they catch sight of the men in question.
 Dick was a shrewd youth.

Many times during the past four years he had proved that this was the case.

The redcoats had found it extremely difficult to outwit him.

This time, however, the Tory, Hubbard, had fooled Dick.

By means of a clever trick he was keeping on the track of the youths without their knowing it.

He was shadowing them by proxy.

A ragged street urchin was following Dick and Bob.

He kept within perhaps half a block of them and never lost sight of them for an instant.

Half a block behind him was another street urchin.

He kept his eyes on the urchin in front.

A short distance behind him were Hubbard and his redcoat comrades.

Hubbard seemed to be in a very good humor.

His plan of shadowing Dick and Bob, without their knowledge, was such a success as to make him feel good-natured.

"You will not escape me this time, Dick Slater," thought Hubbard, while a feeling of fierce delight thrilled him. "I will run you to earth before I stop, and then I will have revenge on you for causing the death of my comrades up at Albany."

Dick and Bob made their way onward at a rapid pace.

They turned corner after corner.

They paid no attention to where they were going.

In fact, they did not know, anyway.

Their main idea was to throw their pursuers off the track.

At last they slackened their speed.

"There," said Bob, "if those fellows have followed us, they are good ones."

"If they were trying to follow us we have certainly thrown them off the track," said Dick.

But he was mistaken.

Half way down the block was a ragged street urchin.

Farther on, at the corner where the streets crossed, was another ragged urchin.

Just around the corner, out of sight of Dick and Bob, but where they could see the second urchin, were Hubbard and his comrades.

A British officer and a couple of soldiers came along, and the officer addressed Hubbard.

"What's going on?" he asked. "You look as if you have some kind of business on hand."

"I have," replied Hubbard, grimly.

"What is the business?"

Hubbard hesitated.

Then he said:

"I'll tell you, if you'll promise not to take the affair out of my hands."

"I promise; now tell me."

"All right. You remember what I told you regarding how a number of my comrades were hanged up in Albany?"

"The time you were going to assassinate General Schuyler?—yes."

"And you remember that our plan was discovered and foiled by that rebel spy, Dick Slater?"

"Yes, I remember that, too."

"Well, I swore to have revenge if ever I got the opportunity, and the opportunity has come."

"It has?"

"Yes; we are shadowing Dick Slater now."

The officer started.

"What!" he exclaimed. "Do you mean to say that Slater, the rebel spy, is in New York City?"

"Yes; and not more than a block distant."

The officer looked eager and excited.

"Is that indeed true?" he cried. "Say, Hubbard, you let me in on this affair?"

Hubbard looked surprised.

"Let you in?" he asked.

"Yes."

"What do you want in?"

"For the reason that I have a grudge against Slater; a score to settle with him."

"You have?"

"Yes."

"What did Dick Slater ever do to you?"

"He killed a chum of mine."

"He did?"

"Yes; it was at the battle of Monmouth. This Slater and his 'Liberty Boys,' as he calls them, charged a battery of which I was commander. They are perfidious fiends, those 'Liberty Boys,' and we could not stop them. They were right in on top of us in a jiffy, and my comrade went down before a bullet fired by this fellow, Dick Slater. Like you, I swore that if ever I got the chance I would have revenge, and now if you will let me, I would like to get it with you."

"You promised not to take the affair out of my hands if I told you what it was," said Hubbard.

"So I did."

"Well, if you will keep your word and let me have control of the affair I will let you in on it."

"All right, Hubbard, I'll keep my word. All I want is to be where I can have the satisfaction of seeing that fellow suffer when the screws are being put to him."

"a chance to tell him that I am having revenge on him for killing my chum. You may do the work."

"All right; come along."

During the conversation, Hubbard had kept his eye on the urchin at the corner.

The urchin had just made a signal and disappeared.

Hubbard moved forward, quickly, followed by his companions.

Meanwhile Dick and Bob had been moving slowly along.

Feeling confident that they had thrown their enemies off the track, they were taking their time.

Suddenly Dick gave utterance to an exclamation, and, taking his hat, bowed gracefully to a young lady who stood in the doorway of a house opposite which they had just come.

The young lady was Jennie Bunker, the girl who had been the means of keeping Dick from giving the papers into wrong hands, the preceding afternoon, and who had, perhaps, saved his life by getting him into her house and away from the Tory, Hubbard, and his redcoat companions who had been following Dick, and had been almost on the point of leaping upon him.

Dick had told Bob the complete story of his adventures the afternoon before, and now told Bob who the girl was.

"Come," said Dick.

He passed through the gateway and advanced to where the girl stood, Bob following, closely.

Dick shook hands with the girl and then introduced Bob. As the girl was shaking hands with Bob, she happened to glance up the street.

"Quick! Come into the house," she said, in a low, excited tone. "Those men who were following you yesterday afternoon are after you again!"

The girl stepped back into the house and Dick and Bob followed.

As he entered, Dick glanced up the street.

He could see no signs of the men anywhere.

"I didn't see anything of the men, Miss Jennie," he said, she closed the door.

"I did," the girl said. "They darted into an alley, half way up the block, when they saw me looking in their direction."

At this instant there came the sound of hurrying footsteps.

This was followed by loud rapping on the door.

The girl quickly and noiselessly shot the bolt, fastening the door.

The girl then made a gesture for the youths to follow her, and tip-toed down the hall.

They had gone but a short distance when a crashing sound was heard at the front door.

"They will break the door down!" the girl whispered.

"Into this room, quick!"

She opened a door as she spoke.

The youths obeyed.

They entered the room.

The girl followed, and as she did so a terrible crash was heard at the front door.

"They have broken the door down!" the girl exclaimed.

"Into that closet, there, quick!"

She pointed toward a door as she spoke.

Dick and Bob hastened to the door indicated, and Dick pulled it open.

A goodly-sized closet was revealed.

The youths entered the closet and pulled the door to.

Scarcely had they done so when the Tory, Hubbard, and the British officer rushed into the room.

The officer involuntarily lifted his hat, but Hubbard did not stand on ceremony.

"Where are they?" he cried.

"Where are who?" asked the girl.

"Those two rebels."

The girl simulated a puzzled look.

"I am sure I don't know what you mean," she said.

"There are no rebels here."

"Begging your pardon, but you are mistaken. We are sure we saw that rebel spy, Dick Slater, and a comrade enter the house, miss, and with or without your permission we must make a search for them," said the Tory.

The girl faced the two, defiantly.

CHAPTER X.

CLOSE PRESSED.

"You are mistaken, sir," she said. "There are no rebel spies in this house."

"Then it won't make any difference to you if we search for them," said the Tory, with a grin. "If they are not here, we won't find them."

"You have no right to do so."

"Might is right, in war-times, miss," the fellow said, with a leer.

The girl realized that she was helpless, so said no more.

"Come," said the Tory to his companion, "let us begin search for those fellows; they are here, somewhere."

As the Tory spoke he walked straight toward the door of the closet in which Dick and Bob were concealed.

The officer kept close by his side.

Reaching the door, the Tory took hold of the knob, turned it and pulled.

The door came open.

As it did so the Tory and the officer started backward with exclamations of dismay.

Dick and Bob were revealed to view.

They stood with their backs to the wall, and each youth had a pair of pistols drawn and leveled.

It was the muzzles of these pistols staring them in the face that had caused the two men to leap back in dismay.

"Up with your hands!" ordered Dick, in a stern, grim voice. "Up with your hands, instantly, or you are dead men!"

There was something in Dick's appearance which inspired the fellows with a feeling of terror.

They realized that the youth meant every word he uttered.

Instinctively they raised their hands.

"Good!" said Dick, approvingly. "Keep your hands up and stand where you are. Don't move, for if you do, it will be the signal for us to put bullets through you!"

The Tory and the officer grew pale.

They had thought to trap Dick Slater, and as the matter stood now they themselves were in a trap.

At this instant footsteps were heard in the hall.

The Tory and redcoats glanced at each other, significantly.

A look of delight appeared in their eyes.

Dick understood what it meant.

The other redcoats were at hand.

Indeed, they were already at the door.

In other moment they would enter the room.

"Tell your men to go away," said Dick, in a low, fierce voice. "Tell them to leave the house instantly. Refuse, and we will fire!"

The threatened men had no choice.

The youths had them at their mercy.

The Tory realized that he must obey or die.

He knew Dick Slater well by reputation.

He knew that the youth would shoot.

He spoke to his men at once.

"Go away, boys," he ordered. "Leave the house. We will be out in a minute."

The sound of tramping feet was heard.

The redcoats had obeyed.

They were leaving the house.

Dick waited until they could not hear the sound of footsteps.

Then eyeing the Tory, he asked, sternly:

"Who are you, and why have you followed us so persistently?"

A fierce look appeared on the Tory's face as he said:

"My name is Hubbard. Not long ago I was the leader of a party who had for their purpose the assassination of General Schuyler."

Dick started.

"I see," he remarked. "I understand."

"I should think you would. You were the means of defeating our object and causing the failure of our plan."

"Myself and friend were," said Dick, quietly; "and we are proud of the fact."

"So we are!" declared Bob. "We heard that all of the gang were hanged. How happens it that you escaped, friend Hubbard?"

"That is neither here nor there. I did escape, and that is sufficient. I swore that I would have revenge on you, Dick Slater, and I will yet keep my oath."

The man spoke fiercely.

It was evident that he would keep his word if it were in his power to do so.

"Don't forget my share of it," grinned Bob. "Don't leave me out when you go to settling up your score. I shall feel hurt if you do."

The Tory frowned.

"I'll not forget you, either!" he almost hissed.

"Thanks," said Bob, airily. "I guess that I'll remember you, too."

Then Dick addressed the officer.

"Who are you, my friend?" he asked. "And what have we done to you?"

"My name does not matter," was the reply; "suffice it to say that you killed my chum at Monmouth. And, like my friend here, I hope some day to have revenge on you."

"It was in battle that I killed your chum, was it not?" asked Dick.

"Yes; it was when you and your 'Liberty Boys' captured the battery on the hill."

"I remember," said Dick. "I did not kill your chum deliberately, however; so you have no cause for seeking revenge."

"That may be your way of looking at it."

"It is the right way to look at it."

"You may think your way, I'll think mine."

"Very well; and now I will give you a piece of advice: Give up the idea of seeking revenge. It will do you no good to try to get revenge, and may do you a good deal of harm. It may lead to the death of both of you, for give you fair warning that I shall protect myself. And

the next time we come together I shall not spare you. It will be your lives or mine, and it won't be mine, if I can help it."

"Surely you are not going to let them go, are you, Dick?" cried Bob, in simulated surprise.

He knew Dick intended doing so, but wished to give the two fellows a scare.

Dick understood this, too.

"Yes, Bob, I guess I will let them go," he said.

"Don't do it, Dick."

"What shall we do with them, then, if we don't let them go?"

"Shoot them, Dick. We've got a good chance now; let's put some bullets through them and end their careers. They're too mean to live, anyway."

Bob spoke in such a matter-of-fact tone, and seemed so in earnest, that the men were evidently alarmed.

They looked at Dick, anxiously.

They awaited his answer with considerable anxiety.

Dick pretended to deliberate.

Then he said:

"I guess we will let them go this time, Bob. We will give them a chance. Next time, however, we will finish them."

A look of relief appeared on the faces of the Tory and the officer.

"May we go now?" the Tory asked.

"You may."

"And thank your lucky stars that you were allowed to escape," said Bob.

The men lowered their hands and started toward the doorway.

They walked in a sidling fashion and kept their eyes on Dick and Bob.

Evidently they feared the youths might change their minds and shoot them, after all.

"One word before you go," said Dick.

The men paused.

"Don't lie in wait for us," said Dick, sternly. "If you do, we will make it our business to select you two as targets, and we will kill you, even if we don't hurt another person."

"All right; we'll not lie in wait for you," mumbled the Tory.

Then the two passed through the doorway, made their way along the hall and out of the house.

"Do you think they'll keep their word, Dick?" asked Bob.

Dick shook his head.

"No," he said; "but by letting them go out the front way, we have fooled them a bit, as it will give us a chance to get out at the rear way and get away. If we had shot them down, there would have been a hornet's nest about our ears in less than no time. We'll have to hurry as it is."

Then he turned to the girl.

"Will you show us how to get out of the house by the rear entrance, Miss Jennie?" he asked.

"Yes, indeed," the girl replied. "Come."

She led the way back through several rooms, and finally opened a door, revealing a narrow alley just beyond.

"Thank you, Miss Jennie," said Dick. "We will be all right now. Good-by."

Dick and Bob shook hands with the girl, and, stepping out of doors, hastened away, down the alley.

The girl looked after Dick for a few moments, with a wistful look in her eyes, then, with a sigh, she stepped back into the house and closed the door.

An hour later Dick and Bob were riding out of New York City.

THE END.

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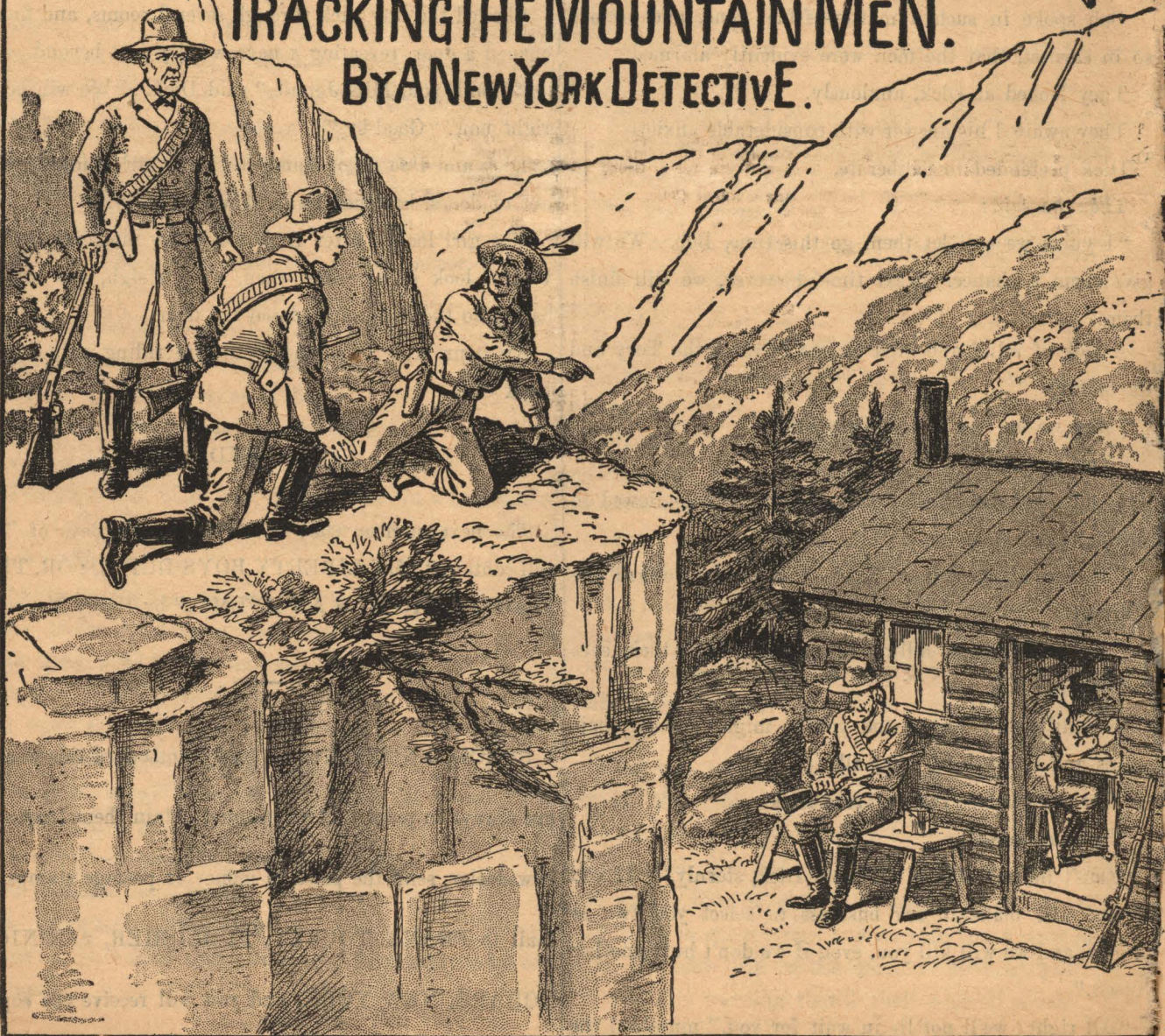
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